



Possible Complications Related to Myeloma

Multiple myeloma is a blood cancer that occurs when healthy plasma cells become abnormal, leading to the production of abnormal antibodies. This change can result in a range of medical problems that affect the bones, kidneys, blood, and the immune system.

Complications in the Bone Marrow

 Bone marrow produces white and red blood cells and platelets. When myeloma cells fill the bone marrow, the production of these blood cells is compromised, leading to anemia, a common symptom of multiple myeloma that is often noticeable in the early stages of the disease.

Bone marrow cells play a crucial role in maintaining bone health by breaking down old bone and stimulating new bone growth. However, the presence of multiple myeloma cells interferes with these processes by:

1. Stimulating the cells that break down bone (osteoclasts).
2. Suppressing cells that build new bone (osteoblasts).

The result of this interference is bone fractures, bone pain, and the release of calcium from the bones into the blood.

Complications in the Rest of the Body

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WITHDRAW CONSENT

nausea

thirst

fatigue

muscle weakness

restlessness

confusion

M-protein can also interfere with blood clotting or circulation, potentially causing other organ or tissue damage (e.g. damage to nerve tissue).

Medical Problems Related to Myeloma

Upon diagnosis, the management of your myeloma is the top priority until remission has been achieved, except in cases of emergency medical problems.



There are medical problems that require immediate attention before beginning systemic therapy for myeloma. Urgent medical problems in myeloma included the following:

compromised bony structures,

nerve damage,

infections, and

kidney disease.

Along with the immediate management of the complications, a prompt consultation with a myeloma specialist is essential to ensure that any treatment of an urgent medical problem does not limit your options for the treatment of myeloma. For example, radiation therapy to shrink a plasmacytoma (tumor) that is pressing on nerve tissue must be weighed carefully against a surgical option, because radiation therapy may damage the bone marrow, thereby limiting your options for myeloma therapy.

Bony complications and nerve damage

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may occur. In addition, myeloma tumors growing in the vertebrae can also press on spinal nerves. Nerve compression is not uncommon. Loss of motor nerves can cause paralysis.

Vertebral compression fractures (VCF) are a serious complication of myeloma. Treatments of VCFs include analgesics to relieve pain, bracing to provide temporary stability, and minimally invasive surgical procedures such as vertebral augmentation and balloon kyphoplasty. For more information about VCFs, read the IMF's publication [Understanding Treatment of Myeloma-Induced Vertebral Compression Fractures \(/node/1628\)](/node/1628).

Infection

The growth of myeloma cells reduces the number and activity of normal plasma cells that produce antibodies against infection, leaving the patient susceptible to infection. Furthermore, as the marrow is taken over by myeloma cells, the production of normal cells, including infection-fighting white blood cells, can be reduced in number. Serious infections may occur, requiring immediate intervention.

Kidney damage or failure

Renal (kidney) damage or failure (</node/1058>) can cause dramatic fatigue and weakness, mental confusion, and decrease or lack of urination. Treatments range from hydration to dialysis.

Blood clots and thromboembolic events

Clotting events (</node/1057>) may be medical emergencies. Treatment is based on patient risk factors, location of the clot, and potential impact on local and distant tissues

Learn More About Multiple Myeloma

The International Myeloma Foundation offers extensive information on multiple myeloma. You can [visit our online resource library \(/node/1265\)](/node/1265) and download ⁺ information you need free of charge. You are also welcome to [c \(/info/line\)](/info/line) on ' InfoLine (</node/993>) to talk with one of our compassionate professionals, they

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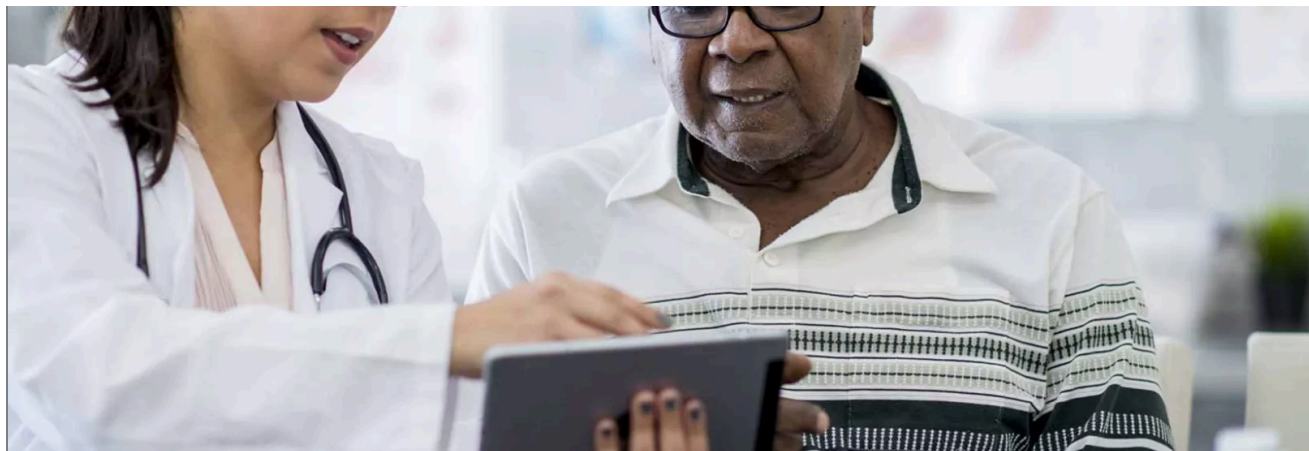


What tests do you need? (/multiple-myeloma-tests)

For myeloma patients, tests are used for diagnosing your disease, discovering the type of myeloma you have, staging the disease, and monitoring your respo

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What Is Multiple Myeloma? (/what-is-multiple-myeloma)

Our bone marrow creates plasma cells that make antibodies, which play an important role in fighting off viruses and bacteria. Multiple myeloma causes the bone marrow

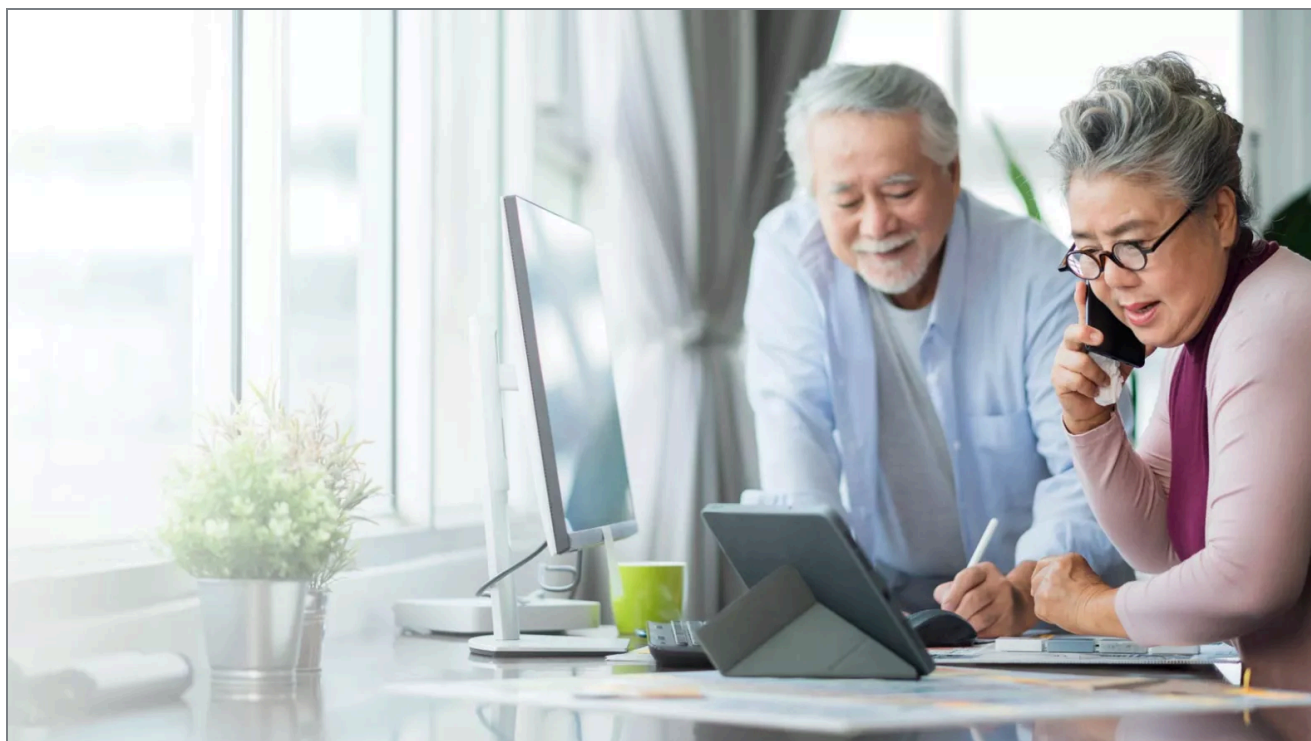


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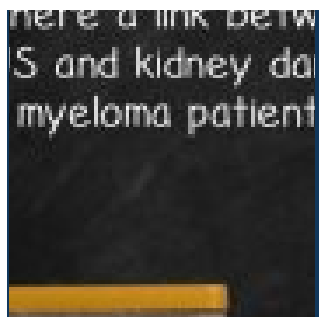
Support Groups (/support-groups)



Contact the InfoLine (/infoLine)

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The International Myeloma Foundation medical and editorial content team

Comprised of leading medical researchers, hematologists, oncologists, oncology-certified nurses, medical editors, and medical journalists, our team has extensive knowledge of the multiple myeloma treatment and care landscape.

Additionally, the content on this page is medically reviewed by myeloma physicians and healthcare professionals.

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